



*News From*

# Maggie Brooks

## *Monroe County Executive*

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### **BROOKS TO DOD'S ENGLAND: HERO'S TRANSPORT "ABHORRENT"**

*County Executive calls for change in transport of fallen soldiers*

In a pointed letter sent to United States Deputy Secretary of Defense Gordon England today, Monroe County Executive **Maggie Brooks** voiced her outrage at the transport of a fallen soldier arriving at the Greater Rochester International Airport on October 27, 2006. Brooks' action was taken following an op-ed appearing in the November 28, 2006 edition of the *Rochester Democrat and Chronicle*, where the writer witnessed a military casket transported along with the luggage of leisure travelers.

According to the author of the op-ed, Cynthia Hoag of Livingston County, she "sat silently watching the casket roll down the belt, and then, to our surprise, disappear into the cart with the rest of the luggage. The waiting soldier stayed with the casket and rode in the cart as they pulled away."

*"It is unfathomable to me that our federal government would allow a fallen military hero to be returned home in this manner, and then transport him along with someone's checked luggage,"* County Executive **Brooks** wrote.

Brooks has subsequently learned that the transport of the fallen soldier is conducted according to the policies and procedures of the federal government. The County Executive immediately requested that this policy be changed.

*"Through your responsibilities as Deputy Secretary of Defense and as a key leader in the Bush Administration, I am asking you to do whatever is necessary to end this abhorrent practice,"* **Brooks** wrote. *"Our military personnel and our veterans deserve better."*

The letter from the County Executive was copied to Donald Rumsfeld, outgoing Secretary of Defense, James Nicholson, Secretary of Veterans affairs, as well as all members of Monroe County's federal delegation.

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